

8^o. Th. A. 136.

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ACCO U N T S
OF THE
TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL
BEING IN
A M E R I C A;
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED BY
R. MANASSEH BEN ISRAEL.

WITH
OBSERVATIONS THEREON, AND EXTRACTS
FROM SACRED AND PROFANE, ANCIENT
AND MODERN HISTORY, CONFIRMING
THE SAME;

AND
THEIR RETURN FROM THENCE ABOUT THE
TIME OF THE RETURN OF THE JEWS.

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Vicar of WORMINGFORD and BOXTED, ESSEX.

COLCHESTER:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY W. KEYMER;
SOLD ALSO BY G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATER-NOSTER-
ROW, LONDON. 1792.

[Price ONE SHILLING.]

ACCOUNTS

OF THE TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL.



There are some inaccuracies in the relations, owing, I suppose, to the translator or transcriber, some I did correct, but others I thought better to let stand than substitute.

Of R. MANASSEH, see Universal Modern History,
vol. xi. p. 154.

N. B. In quoting texts of Scripture, I have not followed our translation, but have endeavoured to give the true one.

A C C O U N T S
OF THE
**TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL BEING IN
AMERICA.**

MANASSEH Ben Israel, an Hebrew divine and philosopher, who resided in England, 1650, published a book called, *The Hope of Israel*, wherein he gives many relations to this purpose, particularly that of Aaron Levi, in 1644.

This Aaron Levi (saith he) gave the following account to me, and other eminent Portuguese at Amsterdam. That above two years before, as he was going from Port Monda, in the Spanish West Indies, in America,

rica, to conduct some mules of an Indian named Castellan, to the province of Quito, in company with other Indians, who before had been among the English a considerable time, among whom was one Francis Canicur: a great tempest happened as they passed over the mountains Cordilleræ, which threw the loaded mules to the ground; the Indians complained of their great losses by the storm, yet confessed that they deserved greater punishments than this for their many heinous crimes. Francis bid them be patient, since they should shortly enjoy rest. They replied, they were unworthy of it, and that the barbarous cruelty of the Spaniards towards them was sent of God, because they had so ill treated his holy people, who were of all the most innocent. They then concluded to stay all night on the top of the mountain; and Aaron Levi took out of a box some bread and cheese, and junkets, (biscuits so called) for his own private use, and gave them to Francis, upbraiding him for speaking disgracefully of the Spaniards: who answered, That he had not told me one half

half of the miseries and calamities they had suffered from that inhuman nation, but that they should be revenged of them by the help of an unknown people.

After this, Aaron Levi went to Cartagena, where he was for some time imprisoned, but being at length released, and much affected with what he had heard from Francis, from whence he began to imagine that the Hebrews, or Jews, were those innocent people, which the Indian had mentioned; he resolved to return to Honda, and find him out, which having happily affected, he asked the Indian whether he remembered what he had spoken upon the mountain? Who replying, Yes, very perfectly; Aaron thereupon engaged him to take a journey with him, giving him three pieces of eight (dollars) to buy him necessaries. When they were got out of the city, Aaron confessed himself to be an Hebrew of the tribe of Levi, and that the Lord was his God; and all the other gods were but mockeries. The Indian being amazed, asked him the name of his

parents ; he answered, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But said Francis, Have you no other father ? He replied, Yes ; his father's name was Ludovicus Montezinus. I am glad of that, said the Indian, for I was in doubt to believe you, while you seemed ignorant of your parents. Aaron swearing that he spoke the truth, the Indian asked him, If he were not the son of Israel ? And he affirmed he was, desiring Francis more fully to explain himself. After which, having refreshed themselves, the Indian thus begun :

If you have a mind to follow me your leader, you shall know whatever you desire, only I must tell you, that whatsoever the journey is, you must go on foot, and eat nothing but parched maiz, (Indian corn) and omit nothing that I require of you ; to all which Aaron consented. Next day being Monday, Francis bid him throw away what he had in his knapsack, and put on a pair of shoes made of packthread, and follow him with his staff. Whereupon Aaron leaving his cloak, sword, and other things about him,

him, they began their journey ; the Indian carrying on his back, three measures of maiz ; two ropes, one full of knots, with a hooked fork to climb up the mountains ; the other was for passing over marshes and rivers, with a little axe. Being thus fitted out, they travelled the whole week 'till the Sabbath day, on which they rested ; the next day they went on, and on Tuesday, about eight in the morning, they came to a large river ; then said the Indian, Here you shall see your brethren, and making a signal with a red linen cloth, which he wore instead of a girdle, soon after they saw a great smoke on the other side of the river ; and after, upon making such another sign as he had done before, three men and a woman came rowing towards them in a canoe, or little Indian boat, cut out of a tree ; and being come near, the woman went on shore, (the men staying in the boat) and talked a long while with the Indian, in a language which Aaron understood not : She then returned in the boat, and told the three men what she had learned
of

of the Indian. The men kept eyeing Aaron, and presently two came out of the boat; and the Indian bowing down to the feet of the two men, and of the woman, they raised him up and embraced him very courteously, talking a great while with him. After this, the Indian bid Aaron be of good courage, and not expect that they should come again to him, 'till he had fully learned those things, that they had been discoursing about. Then the two men standing on each side of Aaron, uttered in Hebrew the fourth verse of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God. And then added what follows, making a short pause between every particular.

1. Our fathers are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob Israel. These three they signified by holding up three fingers, and then added Reuben, adding another finger.

2. We will bestow several places on them who will live with us.

3. Joseph

3. Joseph dwells in the midst of the sea ;
making a sign with two fingers put together,
and then parting them.

4. Speaking fast, they said, Some of us
will go fourth to see, and tread under foot :
At which word they winked and stamped
with their feet.

5. One day we shall all of us talk toge-
ther, and we shall come forth, as issuing out
of our mother the earth.

6. A certain messenger shall go forth.

7. Francis shall tell you more of these
things ; they making a sign with their feet,
that must not be spoken of at that time.

8. Suffer us that we prepare ourselves ;
then turning their faces every way they
prayed, O God do not stay long.

9. Send twelve men ; making a sign that
they

they would have men with beards, and who were skilful in writing, come to them.

The conference being ended, they returned on Wednesday and Thursday, and repeated the same things, without adding or diminishing a word. At length Aaron being concerned that they did not answer what questions he asked them, nor would suffer him to go over the river, he threw himself into their boat ; but being forced out again, he fell into the water, and was in danger of being drowned, for he could not swim ; but being got out, they seemed angry with him for his rash attempt, and for being too inquisitive to know more than they had told him, which they signified by signs and words, as the Indian interpreted them to Aaron. When the four were gone, four more came in the same boat, who all with one mouth rehearsed the nine before-mentioned particulars likewise, without adding or diminishing a word ; and in the three days which they continued there, about three hundred came

came and returned. These men were some-
what scorched by the sun ; some wore their
hair down to their knees, others shorter ;
they had comely bodies, well clothed ; with
ornaments on their feet and legs, and a linen
cloth wound round their heads. Aaron said,
That when he designed to be gone on Thurs-
day evening, they were extremely kind, fur-
nished him with all necessaries for his jour-
ney back again ; and intimated that they were
provided with meat, clothes, cattle, and all
other conveniences of life. Having taken
their leave of these courteous strangers, Aa-
ron and his Indian arrived at the place where
they had rested the night before they came
to the river : You remember Francis, said
Aaron, that my brethren told me, you
should discover something to me, I would
therefore intreat you to be so kind as to re-
late it. The Indian replied, I will tell you
the truth of what I know, as I have received
it from my forefathers ; but if you press me
too earnestly, perhaps you will make me
tell lies ; attend therefore, I pray, to what
I shall speak.

Thy brethren are the sons of Israel, and were brought hither by the Divine Providence of God, who for their sakes wrought many miracles, that you will scarce believe the accounts of them, which I learned from my fathers. We Indians made war upon them, and used them at first more severely, than we are now used by the Spaniards ; and by the instigation of our magicians, whom we call Mohanes, we went armed to that place, where you saw your brethren, with an intent to dismay them ; but not one of those who went thither came back again. Hereupon we raised a great army, and set upon them again, but with the same success, for none escaped : which happened also the third time ; so that this part of India was almost bereft of all its inhabitants, but old men and women. The old men, therefore, and the rest who survived, believing that the magicians used false dealings, consulted among themselves, and resolved to destroy them all ; and many being killed, those who remained promised to discover something that was not known ; upon this

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the old men desisted from slaying them, and the magicians declared as follows.

That the God of the children of Israel, whose destruction they had occasioned, is the true God ; that all which is engraven upon their stone tables is true ; that about the end of the world they shall be lords of the whole earth ; that some should come, who would bring them much good ; and after they had enriched the earth with all good things, those children of Israel going forth out of their country, should subdue all nations under them, as their ancestors subdued their enemies ; and that they should be happy if they could make a league with them.

Hereupon five of the Indians whom they call Cazici, and who were my ancestors, having understood the prophecy of the magicians, which they had learned of the wise-men of the Hebrews, went thither, and after much entreaty obtained their desires, having first made known their mind to a woman, such an one as you saw who was my inter-

preter : for your brethren will have no commerce with us Indians, and if any of ours enter into their country, they instantly kill them ; neither do any of your brethren pass over into our country. Now by the help of this woman we made this agreement with them :—First, that our five Cazici should come to them without any other company at the end of every seventy months. Secondly, that he to whom any secrets should be revealed, should be above the age of three hundred moons or months, that is, near thirty years old. Thirdly, that they would discover nothing in the presence of any but the Cazici alone, and in a desart. This secret, said the Indian, we keep among ourselves, hoping for great favours from them in requital for the good offices we have done for many of their people, but it is not lawful for us to visit them 'till after seventy months, unless some new or very strange accident occurs ; and this fell out thrice from that time : first, when the Spaniards came into our land : secondly, when some ships were discovered in the southern sea : and lastly, when you arrived,

arrived, whom they had long wished for and expected. They rejoice much for these three new things ; because they said several prophecies were fulfilled.

Here the Indian concluded his discourse. Aaron Levi likewise said, that three other Cazici were sent to him, but would not tell their names. They asked Aaron of what nation he was ? Who answered, an Hebrew of the tribe of Levi, and that God was his God. Whereupon they embraced him, and said, the time will come when you shall see us and know us ; we are all your brethren by God's singular favour ; then bidding him farewell, they departed, saying, we go about our business. The Indian, Aaron's late companion, being left behind, he after having saluted Aaron, took his leave also, saying, Farewell brother : I have other things to do ; I go to visit thy brethren with other Hebrew Cazici, who are secure in this country, for we rule all the Indians ; and after we have finished our business with the wicked Spaniards, we will bring you out of your confinement

finement by God's help, not doubting but he who cannot lie will assist us according to his word and promise.

This Aaron Levi, saith Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel, who gave the present relation, being a Jew of our order, born of honest parents at Villefleur, in Portugal, a man of about forty years old, honest and not ambitious, deserves to be credited in what he says above many others. He went to the Indies, where he was put into the inquisition, as a successor of a Jew in Portugal, whom Don Manual the King forced without law or religion to turn christian, who yet to this day privately practises our religion. Being freed out of the Inquisition, he diligently inquired into these things, and was not quiet, 'till he came to Amsterdam to tell us the good news. I myself was well acquainted with him for six months that he dwelt here, and I sometimes made him take an oath in the presence of honest men, that what he told me was true; and two years after he took the same oath on his death-bed. The same

author

author adds several other relations to prove the probability of the Jews being the first inhabitants of America, being driven thither by the force of their enemies.

OTHER RELATIONS.

LA Vega, a famous Spanish author, writes, that in Collai, an eminent province in the West Indies, near a lake, called by the Spaniards, Chuta; among other antiquities and great buildings there, a stately fabric is to be seen, which hath a court fifteen fathoms broad, a wall that compasseth it two furlongs high; on one side is a chamber forty-five feet long, and twenty-two broad; and that the court, the wall, the pavement, the chamber, are made only of one sort of stone; the four sides of the wall are an ell thick. The Indians say this house is dedicated to the Maker of the World, and is judged to have been a synagogue built by the Israelites, since the Indians never knew the use of iron,

wherewith

wherewith this building was joined together*. Other Indians, being asked about it, declare, That their fathers told them, it was erected by a people who were white and bearded like the Spaniards, that came thither a long while before the Indians, inhabitants there, and continued some time after, 'till they were driven further north, into this large new world.

The Indians retain many Hebrew customs, which it is thought they learned from the Israelites ; for in many places they circumcise themselves ; they rend their garments upon some sudden misfortune, or at the death of any relation ; they keep fire continually burning upon their altars in their temples dedicated to the sun ; and forbid women to enter into them, 'till they are purified. Every fiftieth year they celebrate a jubilee at Mexico, the metropolis of Mexico and Peru, with great pomp ; every seventh or sabbath day, all persons were obliged in
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* See Maynard's Josephus Contin. p. 629.

the temple to perform their sacrifices and ceremonies ; they were divorced from their wives in case of incontinency ; they married the widows of their dead brethren ; they had also some knowledge of the creation of the world, and of the universal flood ; all these instances seem to demonstrate that these gentiles learned these things from their ancestors, and they from the Jews, that lived in those places.

Furthermore, the Indians are of a brown colour, and without beards ; but in the new world, white and bearded men were found, who had never commerce with the Spaniards. And the Emperor Charles the Fifth, sending Philippus Utre to discover and plant the northern region of America ; and he, having learned of their neighbours the greatness of the people who were the present inhabitants both in wit and war, determined to make a conquest of them. When he had marched many hundred miles, at last he came towards a rich city, full of people and

fair buildings, and not far off saw two husbandmen tilling the ground, whom his soldiers designed to have made prisoners, to have been guides to them. The men perceiving themselves beset, fled apace towards the city : Philip Utre and his horsemen pursued them hard, and had almost taken them. Whereupon the husbandmen stood still, and with their spears wounded Philip in the breast, piercing through his breast-plate, made of wool to keep off arrows. He wondering at the dexterity of the people, judged it his wisest course not to proceed any further in that province, against a nation so expert in war, and who only with a spear durst resist armed men ; and thereupon retired the same day he came. And to this day none go to that people, neither is it known which way to come thither. A Spanish poet describing this territory, says :

Some countries there so populous are seen,
As one continued city which have been ;
Never as yet discovered, but unknown,
To other nations have laid hid alone ;

Not

Not found by foreign sword, nor foreign
trade

Do either seek or suffer to be made ;
But unacquainted live, 'till God shall please
To manifest his secrets, shew us these.

Again, Pizarro, a Spanish captain, having revolted from his nation, went to search out a new country of Indians, who lived north eastward, whose numbers could never be known, because it is reported to extend above two thousand miles in length.

Peter Osaa, another captain, went with some soldiers up a great river in canoes, and at length came to a large plain, where many houses were built on the water side; by the Indians ; they still went on forty-eight hours together, and saw a great number of lofty white houses, which they feared to go unto, because the inhabitants were numerous, and a noise of hammers like goldsmiths was heard. An Indian, who could speak a little Spanish, said the people were tall of stature, comely in presence, with as great beards, and as valiant and as warlike as the Spaniards.

Eight other Spaniards, after nine months travelling north-westward in America, came to a mountain, to the top of which they arrived with difficulty; from whence they discovered a plain, almost encompassed with a pleasant river; on the banks whereof dwelt a people, who were white and bearded.

And in the reign of the late King Philip the Third of Spain, five ships were sent from Panama, to discover some unknown lands in America, the captain was scarce entered into the South Sea, but he found land, which he called the islands of Solomon and Jerusalem. In his course of sailing he kept close to the shore of these isles, and saw people who were of a brown complexion, and took many; others dwelt in greater and more fruitful islands, these were white men, and wore long garments of silk. The pilot bringing one of the ships too near the shore was split upon a rock, when the islanders ran speedily to see the sight, and what they could get. The captain leaving this island, went further on to discover the main land, and having sailed about

about an hundred leagues in sight of the shore, he perceived by the smoke, that the country was inhabited: whereupon entering one of their ports, many white men, with yellow hair, came to the ship's side; they were tall like giants, richly clothed, and had long beards. But another of his vessels being wrecked in the haven's mouth, he was forced to put again to sea; on which the nations sent two chalofti, or principal men, who were brown like those of the first islands, with sheep, fruits, and other provisions, which they freely bestowed upon them, but withal strictly charged them to depart from their coasts at their peril. The captain brought these two chieftains into Spain, yet could learn nothing of them but by signs; when they were questioned, they would shew their beards, as if the people that sent them, were such kind of men. And they were asked about their religion, they held up their fingers to heaven, implying that they worshipped the God above. In a little while they died in Spain, and so did the captain, who designed, by the king's command, to have

have made a second voyage with a great army for subduing this potent people.

Lastly, a Dutch mariner lately sailed near these countries in a pleasant river, where he found some Indians who understood Spanish, of whom he bought provisions and dye wood; by whose directions he sailed two months up a large river, where he met with white men, bearded, well clothed, and abounding with gold and silver, and many precious stones, having no commerce with the Spaniards. By this account they were thought to be Israelites; and some Jews designed to have sent him again to the same place, to inquire more fully into the matter; but his death, which happened soon after, prevented all further discoveries at that time.

Rabbi Manasseh gives some other relations of antient Jews found in China, and Persia, which I did not transcribe.

SOME

SOME
OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
ABOVE RELATIONS.

THREE may be some Israelites mixed amongst the Jews, and others of them dispersed over various nations conformable to what is said of them in the sacred prophecies; but still the principal body of them I take to be those who are in America, and to these I shall confine what I have to say of them. Aaron Levi's account seems to be very credible, consistent and agreeable to all the informations we have of them in sacred and profane history, and the other relations add confirmation to it. From hence it appears, that the Israelites are a distinct people from

from the original Americans, as they are called by them an unknown or strange people, and on this account very probably they met with so many persecutions from them. No objection can be made to this from La Vega's account, that this people had dwelt and built a temple in the province of Collai, long before the Americans came there; for this only means that they had seized on this particular spot before them; but afterwards the Americans came and seated themselves there, and in process of time drove the Israelites from thence. As was the case at Mexico, for the Mexicans, as Mr. Williams has plausibly laid it down in his Primitive History, came from Brazil; and when they were got to Mexico, as we may learn from the Indian's account, they began to molest and persecute the Israelites, 'till they at last expelled them. That the Indians were very early in these parts we may infer from the Phœnician, Canaanitish, and Cushite rites found amongst them, which argue their being derived from that race; and these came into America, whilst the great Atlantic Continent

tinent or island was existing, but when this was afterwards swallowed up by an earthquake, as the Egyptians confidently affirmed, the communication with America this way was broke off, 'till it was revived again by the Europeans. They might, therefore, introduce some Jewish customs, as there was a great conformity betwixt all the ancient religions, as the worse were a corruption of the true primeval. But what chiefly prevailed amongst the people of the eastern and middle parts of America, were, those which were practised by the Phœnicians, &c. and which were absolutely forbid by the Mosaic law, such as worshipping the sun and moon, and human sacrifices.

Another reason for these Americans persecuting the Israelites, might be out of envy at their superiority. For they could not but observe, that upon many occasions they were peculiarly favoured by Providence, and when adhering to the worship of the One True God, and the laws of their religion, much holier and better than they; besides

which, they had other superiorities over them, by coming into America after the introduction of alphabetical letters, and when arts and sciences had made a greater progres. Their priests the magicians seem also to have instigated them to these persecutions, because the Israelites reprimanded them for their false and idolatrous worship.

The next thing I shall observe is, that several of the Israelites had settled themselves in various places in the southern or middle parts of America, but by these persecutions of the Indians, were at length entirely expelled from them; and this happened some time, and perhaps not long, before the arrival of the Spaniards. We may also take notice they were driven away more and more northerly, and the place of their retreat must be some where in the north west, as Pizzarro, who went in search of their abode by sea, sailing up the Southern, or Pacific Ocean, says, it lays north east, but those that travelled to it by land, say it lays north west. The place were Aaron Levi

Levi saw them, considering the time it took him in travelling to it from Hondura, is most probably in the vicinity of some part of California, or Albion at furthest, and this, according to all accounts, is allowed to be an agreeable situation.

Very lately I met with the following passage in the Universal Modern History * ;

“ The Continent west and north west from “ Charleton Island in Hudson’s Bay, is “ inhabited by Indians, that were better “ clothed, and more civilized, than any “ others in North America, at their first “ discovery. One of these nations, called “ Mosemlecks, deserves particular notice, “ as they lie upon the remote parts of Hud- “ son’s Bay. They are, in consequence of “ their being civilized, rational and con- “ versable; and they have always persever- “ ed in their assertion, that to the north “ west of them are a people who live in “ towns, and who trade with one another “ upon a large lake in vessels, each of them

E 2 “ twenty

* Vol. xxxvi, p. 170, ed. 1783.

" twenty times as big as their canoes." The people here described are different from the Indians, far superior, and quite civilized. And what could so likely make these Indians more civilized than the rest, as having a communication with people civilized by the true religion, that most inestimable blessing? May not Mosemlecks allude to their having learnt something of the law of Moses? Charleton Island lies on the south side of Hudson's Bay, 53 degrees north latitude; but as the writer says, the Mosemlecks lie upon the remote part of Hudson's Bay, they may dwell at the far corner on this side. These civilized people, therefore, who I make no doubt are Israelites, must be settled betwixt 53 and 60 degrees north latitude, and may extend further. I imagine them to be a different body of them from those seen by Aaron Levi; and that all of them are extended here and there over a large tract on the north west side of America; and as those may be the most southern, these may be the most northern. Here, as we shall see afterwards, they are most conveniently situated

ated for their return ; the calling back those this way who had spread into other parts might be considered as an intimation of the time approaching, and may be said to be the commencement of it.

Besides those Israelites that are fixed in the Continent of America, there are very probably some in possession of the adjacent islands, seeing they told Aaron Levi that Joseph dwelt in the midst of the sea, and the eight Spaniards found some islands inhabited by a different people from the rest, and much resembling these.

Having exhibited these proofs of the Israelites being in America, I shall now consider some of the reasons we have to suppose it should be so. Seeing then we have as many or more prophecies for the return of Israel as for the restoration of Judah, we may well imagine they should be kept somewhere a separate and distinct people ; and seeing the Jews are dispersed over all Asia, Africa, Europe, and the provinces of America

rica occupied by the Europeans, where is so likely a place for this purpose, as that part of America, where we have, in a manner, seen them? This also very well agrees with a fine prophecy of the conversion of all nations to christianity, and the returns of Israel and Judah. The Lord will set up an ensign to the nations, and gather the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel * ; the proper meaning of which expression is, the Israelites that were driven into a remote country, and separated from them. What has made these prophecies much overlooked is, because many have persuaded themselves, that under the name of Israel both Israel and Judah is comprehended; and the reason they give for it is, because whilst the two kingdoms continued, many of the kingdom of Israel went over to the kingdom of Judah, but though some went over to attend the worship of the temple at Jerusalem, yet of these, few incorporated with them: and at the return from the Babylonish captivity, it is

* Isaiah xi. 12.

is supposed, many of the tribes of Israel returned with the Jews, but these bore no proportion with the main body. And supposing many of them had incorporated with the Jews yet still the prophecies speak of both together, in such a distinct manner, as shews in the main they will both continue a separate body of people 'till that period:— When the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people; when he shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth; and the envy of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim, Isaiah xi. 11—13. In those days the house of Judah shall walk friendly with the house Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north, to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto their fathers, Jeremiah iii. 18. I will take the stick of Joseph, saith the Lord, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them

to him, *with the stick of Judah*, and make them one stick in my hand. Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land, and will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all ; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more. Ezekiel xxxvii. 19. 21. 22.

Besides, after God had sent the ten tribes of Israel into captivity, it is not to be thought he should have laid aside all further concern about them ; for as he himself argues, I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born, Jeremiah xxxi. 9. And that he did not wholly lay aside all care of them after he had sent them into this captivity, is very evident ; seeing Ezekiel, whom we may, in some measure, consider as their prophet, was oft sent or carried to them by the spirit of the Lord, to lay their transgressions before them, and denounce his judgments

judgements against them. See chapters iii. vi. vii. viii. Upon occasions they sent messengers to him to enquire of the Lord concerning something in regard to their behaviour where they were, and it is thought by some, whether they might not conform to the worship of those countries, as God seems to resent it, and refuses to be enquired of by them. See chapters xiv. xx. 32. And by this intercommunication, which was for some time kept up betwixt them and their brethren of Judah, they might become acquainted with all those things which were spoken of them by the prophets after they were gone into captivity, as they had been acquainted with those which were spoken of them before, which were very many; for besides what are interspersed in others, the prophecy of Hosea is almost entirely addressed to them.

I shall now endeavour to give a short history of the ten tribes of Israel, from their going into captivity, to their return from it.

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The ten tribes of Israel were carried away captive by Tiglath-Pilasar and Salmanasar Kings of Assyria, to the cities of Media beyond the Euphrates*, viz. those he had lately taken from them. For it was the policy of those times, when they had taken any cities to remove the inhabitants to other parts of their dominions, and replace them with those they conquered in other countries. But these cities were soon after re-taken ; for, about thirty-eight years after, the kingdom of Assyria was subdued by the Medes, and consequently the Israelites became subject to them. During this period, it is related in a fragment of Ctesias, collected by Diodorus Siculus, lib. ii. That Parsodes excited the Cadusians with others to struggle with the Medes to shake off their yoke ; and that they being very numerous, gained an advantage in this contest. After which, as he strictly charged at his death, they kept carrying on hostilities with them, 'till Cyrus gained the empire. By the Cadusians,

* II. Kings xvii. 6. xviii. 10, &c. I. Chron. v.

sians, none of the captive nations are so likely to be understood, as the Israelites. The word Cadusii or Cadusians, is of Hebrew extraction, and signifies saints or holy persons; and they might give themselves this denomination, from being worshippers of the true and holy God, and professing their having received from him a most holy religion. And this very word or title is given to the Hebrews in the prophecy of Daniel, xii. 7. vii. 25. for though the latter may be restrained to the Jews, the former may be extended to the Israelites; and besides it was strongly inculcated upon them in their writings, that when God took them to himself, they were to be unto him a peculiar and holy people. In the next place, Herodotus mentions the Cadusians amongst the several nations or people, whom Cyrus brought with him to the siege of Babylon.

After the return of the Jews from their Babylonish captivity, when Xerxes wrote a letter in their favour, and gave full leave for all the Israelites of whatever denomination

to return to Jerusalem ; Josephus tells us, they sent a copy of it to all the Jews in Media. And the Jews in general expressed great satisfaction at it, and hastened in great numbers with their effects to return to Jerusalem ; but the Israelites, who had been long accustomed to the place, and settled in their habitations, chose rather to continue where they were. And these ten tribes, he adds, which are all placed beyond the Euphrates, are so prodigiously increased in numbers as to be almost beyond computation*.

After this, we are told by Esdras †, who, as to his historical parts, being plainly a compiler, may have taken it from a memorial then extant, or what was then currently reported amongst the Jews of his time ;— they took counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country where never mankind dwelt, that they might keep their statutes, which they never kept in

* Josephus Antiq. b. ix. c. iv.

† ii. c. vii. 40, &c.

in their own land. And they entered into the Euphrates by the narrow passages of that river. For the Most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, 'till they were passed over. For through that country there was a great way to go, namely of a year and an half, and the same region is called Arsareth, or according to some copies, Ararath. It is most probable the Israelites did not undertake the withdrawing themselves into this far country, without a Divine admonition, or having some prophet raised up to excite them to it; as Esdras mentions the Most High gave great countenance to it, by shewing mighty signs, and drying up the Euphrates for their passage over on their first enterprising it; nor could they have had any intelligence of the country whither they were going, as no one had been there before. After this, we may suppose they were divinely directed in all their stages on the journey, which lay most likely thro' a wilderness, or the most unfrequented parts of the country, and were supported and defended by a similar course of miracles to

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what they had formerly experienced in their passage from Egypt to Canaan. And that they were to be brought from the land of their captivity into a wilderness, where God would plead with them face to face, or chafe them privately, and so purge out the great rebels from amongst them, as he had done with their forefathers, when he led them out of Egypt, is expressly foretold by the prophet Ezekiel, xx. 34—8*. and it is further added, that though God would bring them into a wilderness for this purpose, it should not be as when they came out of Egypt to enter or be led by him into their own land: however, that this he would do hereafter, and that then they should serve him faithfully and acceptably, is intimated in the following verses, 39, 40.

And the next thing we hear of them in profane history is, that Artaxerxes Mnemon, as it is related by Plutarch, made an expedition against the Cadufians with three hundred thousand foot men and ten thousand horse,

* See also Hosea, ii. 14.

horse, most probably like Pharoah, with a view of recovering and reducing them to that state of subjection they had been in before to the Persians. That they were then got into a wilderness may be inferred from the distresses which befell Artaxerxes, which are attributed to the roughness of the country, and also the great mistiness, in which there might be something miraculous, answering to the darkness which was interposed betwixt the Egyptians and Israelites, to prevent their overtaking them; and further, that it was uncultivated, and had little more than pears and apples, and such wild fruit to sustain this strong and warlike people; but which Artaxerxes was not able to subsist on with his army, and therefore was obliged to procure provisions at a great expence, and at last to kill many of his beasts of burthen for their support. Meeting with these and other such calamities, which might convince them that the Israelites were defended by a superior power, the only thing they thought they could do for their safety was, what the Americans did when they met with

with those great overthrows on attacking them in their retreat, to enter into a treaty with them ; and this they effected in the following manner. Tiribazus finding they were under two kings, and encamped separately, went to one himself, and sent his son to the other, each assuring the king he went to, that the other had deputed an ambassador to Artaxerxes, to make an alliance with him, and so advising him to do so likewise ; and by this means they brought ambassadors from both together for this purpose. After which we hear no more of them ; and how can it be imagined, that such a numerous people as the Israelites are described in all these passages, should of a sudden disappear, and never since be discovered in any of these parts, except by their withdrawing themselves to some remote country ?

That this country was America is very probable, seeing it answers all the intimations given in the sacred writings of the place they were to go to. For supposing the Israelites to have crossed over into America at

at the straits which have been lately discovered, it might well take them up a year and an half to get thither. As for the region called Arsareth or Ararath, this I imagine to have been the name of the country through which they were to pass to it; Ararat plainly points to the mountains of Armenia, and perhaps what was expressed in the original might be, they were to go into a country which lay beyond those mountains. And this meets with some confirmation from what is said in the prophet Amos, iv. 3. And ye shall break forth and go out [orderly] one before the other, and ye shall be cast *e Armune* on the mountains of Mini, Mynias, or as they are now generally called Armenia*. As the river Euphrates was stopt and held up for their passage over on their entrance upon this journey; so very likely was the sea in this part for their passage over into America: and this part of America where they entered was, in all probability,

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* Some versions read beyond the mountains of Armenia. See Poli Syop.

bility, then a desert, and where no man had ever dwelt before. However, in process of time, as we may learn from the above accounts, they removed into the more populous parts, and in this respect they might answer the same divine purpose, which they and the people of Judah had oft done in the old world, viz. by being sent to the most powerful nations to be as it were a beacon on a hill, to check their idolatries, and other corruptions of religion, and to revive or afford them fresh communications of the great and important doctrines of the revealed. Whence we may perceive that this part of the earth, no more than the others, was deprived of its share of revelation. When those people were coming into America, who were in possession of the Gospel, then was the time for the Israelites to be withdrawn: and when they are called out again it may be to answer some other great and glorious purpose; and what can this more probably be, than to join with the Jews in holding forth the evidence of the law, which

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may have received some additional force from their having kept it separately, and converting all nations to the christian faith ? All this agrees very well with what is said of Ephraim in the prophet Zechariah, x. 9. I will sow them among the people, and they shall remember me in a far country, and they shall live there with their children, and turn or rather return again.

When this event comes to pass, it will be very illustrious and conspicuous, it shall be made evident to the chief of nations *, and shall be a deliverance far superior to that from their Egyptian bondage ; whence it shall no more be said, the Lord liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, but the Lord liveth who brought up, and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country and from all countries, whither I had driven them, and they shall dwell in their own land †.

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* Jer. xxxi. 7.

† xxiii. 7, 8.

And what may be considered as a further proof that the ten tribes of Israel are in America, and will return from thence thro' the straits by which I suppose they passed into it is, that in all these places mentioning their return, a particular stress is laid on calling them out of the north country: and that they shall return the same way they went, is plainly intimated in these words, wherein they are called upon to mark all the stages they went through, as they were to return by them;—Set up way-marks, make thee high heaps, set thine heart towards the high way, even the way thou wentest; turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities *.

As I supposed before, the water of the ocean were dried up for the entrance of the Israelites into America; so considering they will be brought back by a special Providence, it might be presumed, they will be dried up again on their return: but I will go further, it is declared so in the prophecies,
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for where it is said *, I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them, and they shall be as though I had not cast them off, and they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine, I will hiss to them and gather them; after which it is added †, and he shall pass through the sea with affliction, (or straitness, which is more near to the original,) and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: there is nothing in the Hebrew which answers to the preposition *with*, and it seemed to me very incongruous in a place speaking of the glorious deliverance of Israel, and the overthrow of all his enemies, it should be said, that he should pass the sea with affliction; what, therefore, I plainly perceive to be the proper translation of these words, and which I find upon examination has been adopted by others, and is very applicable to our purpose is, he shall pass through the strait sea, and smite the waters in it, and the deeps of the river shall dry up.

Another

* Zech. x. 6, 7.

† v. 11.

Another thing observable here is, the naming Joseph and Ephraim so distinctly and particularly, gives great countenance to the accounts inserted above of the Israelites being divided into two kingdoms ; and that one is called the kingdom or people of Joseph, and the other the kingdom or people of Ephraim : and as the Israelites in America told Aaron Levi that Joseph dwelt in the midst of the sea, so there seems a probability that the kingdom or people of Ephraim is in the continent of America, and the kingdom or people of Joseph in some adjacent islands. Now supposing the tribe of Manasses, as the first-born, have taken the name of Joseph, there may be an allusion to this in Jacob's prophetical blessing of his two sons, Gen. xlviii *. And as Ephraim and his associates are seated in the continent of America, we may suppose them to be a much more powerful people than Joseph and his, and to be a multitude of nations or principalities, though Joseph may be also a great people :

* See also Isaiah ix. 21.

people: and when was such a distinction observable betwixt them before their captivity?

The return of the ten tribes of Israel will be nearly about the same time with the return of the Jews, as it is said they shall both come out of the land of the north together*. And this receives some further confirmation from what is said in Hosea xi. 10, 11. according to Dr. Waterland's translation, which seems much the best of any—They, the Israelites, shall walk after the Lord, who shall roar like a Lion; when he shall roar, then the children shall come fluttering from the west, so in our translation.—A Lion was the standard of the tribe of Judah, and to a Lion Judah is compared; the roaring of the Lord like a Lion may therefore, signify a report shall come to them from the Lord, that Judah has got again into his own country, and at this they shall come hastening to them. They shall come fluttering as a bird out of Egypt, by which it has been thought

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* Jerem. iii. 18.

is meant the Crane, and as a Dove out of the land of Affyria ; and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord God. The figurative language here used is very beautiful and expressive, as Cranes and Doves are well known, after a long migration, to return constantly to their old habitations.

This event will very probably happen about the time of the battle of Gog and Magog, as then the Jews will most of them have got into their own country, and tidings out of the east and out of the north are to trouble their invader * ; and what can so likely do this, as of the Israelites coming from these parts ? They that come over from America through the strait sea will pour down from the north into Judea ; and they that are in the islands will more likely arrive upon the eastern shores, and proceed from thence. Or should they both enter into Asia at the same place, they may justify the expressions of coming from the east and from the north. But be this as it will, we have

have as strong intimations of their coming from the sea coasts, and I may say, consequently from the east as from the north; as in Jeremiah *, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts or sides of the earth; and the same is implied in what is rendered from the west in the prophecy of Hosea, for the Hebrew word literally signifies from the sea; but it is very properly rendered west in many places, because the Mediterranean, the great sea to Judea, lays on its west side.

It is likewise observable, the joining together the two sticks of Joseph or Ephraim and Judah, is mentioned in Ezekiel xxxvii. after the vision of the resurrection of the dry bones, which though many think was intended to assure the Jews they should soon be delivered from their Babylonish captivity, which they began to despair of, and restored to their own land; yet, on a careful consideration, it appears to me to have been made for the consolation of the ten tribes of

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Israel.

* xxxi. 8.

Israel. Judah is not once mentioned in this chapter, and the preceding is wholly employed about Israel ; besides, it is here expressly said, the dry bones were the whole house of Israel ; and Ezekiel was ordered to declare it to them, because they complained our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts : the ground of which seems to be, they knew a promise was made to Judah of a return at no great distance from its Babylonish captivity, but no such had been made to them. And seeing again how long they have been concealed from this part of the world, in which they formerly lived ; how applicable to them will be the conclusion at its accomplishment ? Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

After their return to their own land, they and the Jews will become once more a war-like and conquering people. For as it is expressed in Zechariah ix. 13. alluding to these

these times, when I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Sion, against thy sons, O Greece; (the original word Ion, signifies all those countries the Grecians formerly possessed in Asia) and made thee as the sword of a mighty man, the Lord shall be seen over them, and his armies shall go forth as lightning, and the Lord shall blow with trumpets, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south, and the Lord of Hosts shall defend them, and they shall devour and subdue with sling stones. And this I take to be the meaning of that expression in Joel ii. 31. The moon shall be turned into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord come; for as the sun is a simbol of the gospel and its professors, so is the moon of the law and its professors; and as by the great and terrible day of the Lord, I have shewn in my View of the great Events, is meant, the time when all the adversaries of christianity will be finally overthrown by the signal judgments of God, and all such as oppose the embracing it at the

time of the conversion of all nations ; so before this period the Jews will become warlike, subdue all the adversary nations around them, and fully establish themselves. As on their return they will find themselves so much encreased, that their old territories in Canaan will be too strait for them * ; and as there are intimations that the Affyrian, (which can signify nothing else at this period but the Turkish empire) shall fall down before them † ; and God declares he will remove the northern army or people, which must also mean the Turks, and will drive them into a land barren and desolate, with his face towards the east sea, and his hinder part towards the utmost sea ‡ : we may imagine, according to the ancient promise, they will be soon put in possession of the whole country from the Euphrates to the Nile.

With the restoration of the Jews, and the return of the Israelites, is also mentioned as closely

* Is. xlix. 20.

† Zech. x. 11.

‡ Joel ii. 20.

closely connected with it, the conversion or coming in of all nations * ; so that it is an event which may be contemplated with satisfaction, and devoutly wished for by all who have christianity at heart.

One thing I shall here add, which may serve further to illustrate what I have said on the seventh vial of wrath ; when this is poured out, we are told †, The great city city was divided into three parts ; by the great city, it seems reasonable to understand here, the empire or kingdom of the Holy Land, as the cities of the nations are mentioned afterwards ; the three parts into which it will be divided, may then signify three provinces, one of Judah, another of Ephraim, and another of Joseph. The cities of the nations are to fall or be overthrown, and Babylon or Rome is to be particularly remembered, so as to meet with a distinguished punishment ; every island or little state will fly away, and the mountains

or

or great empires will not be found. And this agrees very well with what is said in the prophecies of Jeremiah * ; tho' I make a full end of all nations, saith the Lord, yet will I not make a full end of thee.

Such a division seems also to be intimated in Ezekiel xlvii. 13. This shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land of Israel, according to the twelve tribes of Israel; Joseph shall have two portions.

* Jer. xxx. 11. xlvi. 28.

F I N I S.

